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Contact: Matt Lloyd

PENCE SUPPORTS DEFENSE BILL

Congressman Praises Bill for Providing for Protection of Armed Forces

Washington, May 20, 2004 - Washington, D.C.— U.S. Congressman Mike Pence today voted to authorize more than \$400 billion in this year's budget to fund the Department of Defense for FY 2005, including programs to fight the war on terrorism and protect American troops in Iraq from chemical and biological weapons. The National Defense Authorization Act passed 391-34.

Pence's remarks and brief background on the bill follow:

"To provide for the common defense is the first objective of the federal government and I strongly support the National Defense Authorization Act because it meets that objective.

"American soldiers, with the help of coalition forces have accomplished the extraordinary in recent months. They have liberated 50 million people in Iraq and Afghanistan, captured and imprisoned a brutal dictator, deposed an evil regime and seized caches of enemy weapons and munitions, including ominously this week, weapons of mass destruction in the form of munitions containing sarin gas.

"It is precisely this discovery of chemical weapons that concerns myself and most Members of Congress deeply because the well-being of our men and women in uniform in Iraq is at stake.

"I'm pleased to say that H.R. 4200 provides an extraordinary amount of resources in the form of force protection: \$1.5 billion for chemical and biological defense programs, individual protection,

decontamination equipment, and chemical and biological protective shelters, just to name a few.

-MORE-

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“We have most certainly now found weapons of mass destruction in Iraq, and the nature of the munitions we have found suggests that there are more stockpiles yet to be uncovered. It is for this reason that we must protect our forces in that theater of operations from exposure to these weapons of mass destruction and the National Defense Authorization Act achieves that goal.”

Additional Background on the Bill

H.R. 4200 improves the military’s ability to defeat terrorism by:

I Continuing emphasis on Special Operations Forces and their role in the fight against terrorism, providing an increase of \$41 million for weapons procurement

I Accelerating the development and fielding of advanced technologies for the fight against terrorism, providing an increase of \$100 million for anti-terrorism technology support

I Accelerating the development and fielding of advanced technologies for emerging critical operational needs, including \$100 million for the Defense Department’s Quick Reaction Special Projects program for protection against improvised explosive devices, rocket and mortar attack, and to provide real-time surveillance of suspected enemy activities

I Providing more than \$1 billion for chemical biological defense programs, including \$75 million for an expanded chemical biological defense science and technology initiative

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